

U.N. considering pressure on Iran

DAVOS, Switzerland (R) — The United Nations Security Council is considering a new resolution to add pressure on Iran to agree to a ceasefire in the Gulf war, a senior U.S. official said Sunday. Vernon Walters, Washington's ambassador to the U.N., told a news conference that the Security Council was considering a British proposal for a follow-up to Resolution 598, which demanded a ceasefire and threatened sanctions. Walters did not describe the British draft in detail but said: "We are trying to do something along this line. When we have worked something out, we will go to the secretary-general, (Javier Perez de Cuellar), and the whole membership to see if they can add anything that is agreeable." Walters, in Davos for the annual World Economic Forum, said he had a hunch fighting in the Gulf would end by April or May. "There's a certain amount of exhaustion on both sides," he said. "I think Iran is finally getting the message on the U.N. resolution." Asked on what he based his prediction, he said: "It's a personal hunch, influenced perhaps by hope." In London, a British Foreign Office spokesman said the permanent members of the Security Council were considering more than one text of a proposal for a follow-up resolution.

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Rifai meets Kuwaiti envoy

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister Zaid Al Rifai Sunday received Kuwait's Ambassador to Jordan Ibrahim Al Bahou, whose term in office in Jordan has ended. Mr. Rifai also received Islamic Organizations and Societies Council Chairman Abdul Latif Al Subeih and council members.

Kuwaiti education minister arrives

AMMAN (Petra) — Kuwait Education Minister and Acting Minister of Higher Education Anwar Abdullah Al Nouri arrived here Sunday on a four-day visit to Jordan. Nouri will discuss with Deputy Prime Minister and Education Minister Thouran Hindawi and Minister of Higher Education Nasseruddin Al Assad means of developing and promoting relations in education between Jordan and Kuwait. In an arrival statement Nouri said he would sign an executive program of cooperation already reached between both countries.

EC delegation begins visit

AMMAN (Petra) — A delegation from the European Community (EC) led by director of the Middle and Near East Affairs Department arrived here Sunday on a several-day official visit to Jordan. The delegation members will meet with senior Jordanian officials and will sign minutes of the third protocol concluded between Jordan and the EC. Under the protocol the EC will provide Jordan with grants and loans worth \$115 million to help finance various development projects, in irrigation, vocational education, and agriculture in addition to exploration of water resources.

Habib leaves

AMMAN (R) — U.S. envoy Philip Habib left for home Sunday after giving His Majesty King Hussein a message from U.S. President Ronald Reagan about the Israeli-occupied territories, an embassy spokesman said.

Hostage mediator back in Beirut

BEIRUT (R) — A mediator seeking the release of two French girls held by a Palestinian group arrived in Beirut Sunday and said the release had been delayed. Lucien Bitterlin told reporters at Beirut airport that the Patriarch Revolutionary Council (FRC), led by Abu Nidal, asked him to return to Beirut for more talks on the release of Marie-Laure Valente, five, and her six-year-old sister Virginie. "The release is delayed, I think it will be delayed for a few days... I am coming to continue the negotiations," said Bitterlin, president of the Franco-Arab Solidarity Association. "I have to meet some officials to see what are the possibilities for the release of the children," he said. He went to the Mar Elias refugee camp in west Beirut where he met officials of the FRC.

SLA base attacked

RASHAYA (R) — The Israeli-backed South Lebanon Army (SLA) said one of its fighters was wounded Sunday in a rocket attack by guerrillas. The SLA-run "Voice of the South" radio station said the fighter was wounded when rockets crashed into his hilltop position south of the market town of Nabatiyeh.

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Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Peace Foundation

جريدة الأردن للسياسة والرأي

PLO delegation ends visit

AMMAN (J.T.) — A delegation from the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) left Amman Sunday at the end of a four-day visit to Jordan for talks with Prime Minister Zaid Rifai and other ministers. The talks covered all aspects of the Arab-Israeli conflict and means of ensuring a just and durable settlement to the Middle East problem, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, said. During the talks both sides underlined the importance of coordination between Jordan and the PLO through the Arab League's seven-member committee set up by Arab foreign ministers during their last meeting in Tunis. The committee aims at serving the cause of the Arab people under Israeli rule, ending occupation and supporting the Arab uprising in the occupied territories. The PLO delegation comprised members of the Executive Committee, Mahmoud Abbas and Abdullah Al Hourani. They were seen off by Minister of Occupied Territories Affairs Marwan Duhun and other Jordanian officials, as well as PLO representative in Jordan Abdul Razzak Al Yahya.



His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan is sworn in as Regent before His Majesty King Hussein Sunday on the eve of His Majesty's

departure for Italy at the beginning of a visit to several European countries (Petra photo)

Protesters battle Israeli troops with stones; six more shot and wounded

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — At least six Palestinian protesters were shot and wounded and scores were injured after being beaten up or inhaling tear-gas Sunday as Palestinian anti-occupation protests that began Dec. 9 showed no signs of let-up.

Israeli soldiers clashed with demonstrators in several towns and villages in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip, including the site of the Church of the Sepulcher in Jerusalem.

The daily newspaper Haaretz said Israeli officials were convinced the uprising would continue for "a long time to come." Troops clamped curfews on the town of Nablus and several refugee camps in the occupied territories.

Some churches in Arab Jerusalem and the West Bank held a day of mourning for the Palestinians shot dead by Israelis since the revolt began Dec. 9.

An army spokesman said troops were forced to open fire in the Palestinian refugee camp of Jalazoun, north of Ramallah, when tear-gas and rubber bullets failed to halt stone-throwing demonstrators advancing on an army patrol. Troops placed the camp under curfew.

A doctor at Ramallah hospital said a 17-year-old Jalazoun resident, Mamoun Ibrahim, was admitted with a gunshot wound in the back and was in stable condition.

Troops in Ramallah city centre and the Al Amari refugee camp on the edge of town fired tear-gas to disperse stone-throwing demonstrators, the spokesman said.

In Nablus, staff at the Al Ittihad hospital told Reuters they were treating five Palestinians shot in the legs, stomach and back.

In Nablus, the largest city in the West Bank, violent clashes continued for the second day and the army clamped a curfew on parts of the city and the Nablus refugee camp.

Three protesters were wounded by army gunfire, said officials at Al Ittihad hospital.

Protracted street battles

Stones littered the city's deserted streets, and columns of thick black smoke from burning tyres rose from several sites as masked protesters fought protracted street battles with soldiers.

In one clash a dozen Arabs

hurled stones, bottles, iron bars and marbles from slingshots at soldiers for nearly two hours. The protesters ran off when the Israelis fired live rounds towards them but returned five minutes later after the Israeli jeep drove off and threw a blazing tyre into the road in an apparent attempt to draw more troops into confrontation.

From a ridge, thick plumes of smoke from what seemed to be burning tyres rose into the air, mixing with clouds of tear-gas as an army helicopter hovered overhead.

Soldiers declared the area closed to reporters and jeeps with loudspeakers toured the city centre announcing an indefinite curfew.

Israeli forces Saturday shot and wounded at least 20 Arabs in Nablus and elsewhere in the occupied territories.

Clash around church

Police fired tear-gas at Arab protesters near one of Christianity's holiest shrines.

A Jewish settler was critically burned when a firebomb was hurled at his car north Ramallah, said a hospital spokeswoman.

Near the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, where tradition says Christ was buried, police fired tear-gas to disperse about 200 protesters, mostly women, who shouted anti-Israeli slogans after attending a memorial service for the Palestinian martyrs.

Later Sunday, stone-throwing protesters clashed with riot police firing tear-gas at the same site, about 100 metres from the church.

Arafat renews call

In Tunis, Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) leader Yasir Arafat repeated his call for an international force to protect the people in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

"The insurrection in the occupied territories shows the unshakable will of the Palestinian people to assert their claim to existence and self-determination," said Arafat, speaking Saturday at the opening of the fourth Inter-American Socialist Congress in the Tunisian capital.

He repeated his call for an international force in the West Bank and Gaza Strip to assure the protection of Palestinians against Israeli barbarism and an international peace conference.

Aquino says 47,000 rebels and supporters surrendered

MANILA (R) — Philippines President Corazon Aquino Sunday said an amnesty had brought the surrender of 47,000 Communist rebels and supporters.

In a radio talk show, Aquino also pledged to stand by her soldiers whom human rights groups have accused of abuses.

Aquino said her amnesty programme, aimed at defusing the 19-year-old Communist insurgency, had brought jobs to former rebels and their sympathisers.

She did not say how many of the 47,000 were rebel regulars but officials earlier said they numbered about 4,000.

Britain's SDP splits

LONDON (R) — Britain's Social Democratic Party (SDP) broke up in acrimony and discord Sunday, ending a seven-year dream to command the centre ground of politics.

By a vote of 273 to 28 at a special meeting of its ruling council in the northern city of Sheffield, the bulk of the SDP opted to unite with their fellow opposition Liberals while a minority faction will form a new party behind former leader David Owen.

Owen's anti-merger supporters either abstained or took no part in the ballot, conceding their cause was lost but determined to make it a hollow victory for party leader Robert MacLennan.

The result, however, showed a clear majority of the 480-member council in favour of a merger and was immediately hailed as a victory for MacLennan, who is backed by only one of the four other SDP members of parliament.

Liberal MP Paddy Ashdown, tipped as a candidate for leader of the merged party, expressed delight at the outcome. "It was overwhelming. That's not the level of abstentions Owen was looking for."

The statement was issued by Mohammad Yaqub Sharafat, newly-appointed public relations officer of the alliance.

Greece, Turkey announce agreement to improve ties

DAVOS (R) — The prime ministers of Greece and Turkey, feuding NATO allies which nearly went to war last year, agreed at a meeting here Sunday to improve relations.

Greece's Andreas Papandreou and Turkey's Turgut Ozal issued a joint statement after holding three-and-a-half hours of talks in this exclusive Alpine ski resort in neutral Switzerland.

The statement said they had agreed to open a direct telephone line and to establish a Turkish-Greek chamber of commerce.

They would also set up working parties on political and economic affairs and hold a meeting of the two government heads at least once a year, the statement said.

In March last year, Greece and Turkey, amid a long-standing dispute over mineral and territorial rights in the Aegean Sea, moved to the brink of war — an event the communiqué said "should never be repeated."

The two leaders are in Davos attending the week-long World Economic Forum, which groups leading political and business figures from around the world.

The recent crisis in the Aegean which brought the two countries to the brink of war, expressed at the same time their optimism introduced as a consequence of exchange of messages between them.

"They agreed that from now on such a crisis should never be repeated and both sides must concentrate their efforts for the establishment of lasting peaceful relations," it said.

Afghan rebel alliance plans to form government

ISLAMABAD (R) — Afghan rebel leaders Sunday announced plans to set up a government to take power after the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan.

A statement issued in Pakistan by the main seven-party alliance said it would be led by the Mujahideen guerrillas but would include refugees and "Muslims" from inside Afghanistan.

A spokesman for the alliance said the government would be set up initially in rebel-held parts of Afghanistan, but the question of how it was to be chosen was still to be decided.

The rebels called on "Muslims" inside the war-torn country to approach local guerrilla commanders quickly. They would be accepted as "Muslim brothers"

and later given cards by the alliance.

But the statement reiterated the rebels' refusal to contemplate sharing power with "communists and atheists" and warned that any outside attempt to impose a government would not end the conflict.

It was issued hours after the departure from Pakistan of U.N. mediator Diego Cordovez, who has been seeking to negotiate an Afghan peace settlement since 1982. He left for Kabul Sunday morning on the fourth stage of a diplomatic shuttle which since Jan. 20 has taken him to Islamabad twice and Kabul once before.

The statement was issued by Mohammad Yaqub Sharafat, newly-appointed public relations officer of the alliance.

But it was a rancorous end for what was once known as the nice party of British politics. They broke up, in the words of Owen

and the sly, mean, petty children."

In a plea for tolerance, he added: "This is the final parting of the ways, we have to restore the credibility of the centre ground of British politics and that won't be easy."

Owen himself pointedly snubbed the final session and ballot after addressing a rally of his supporters Saturday night, his use of the conference hall itself speaking a legal wrangle between the warring factions.

Up the end, even the way the vote was conducted caused a dispute over whether it should be a ballot or a show of hands.

Receiving a warm response at his rally from about 800 followers, Owen — who will be joined by the SDP's two London MPs — said: "We will remain a national party. If need be, we are ready to fight every seat at the next election."

The Liberals overwhelmingly agreed to unite at a special assembly last weekend in Blackpool. A simple majority now in a postal ballot of members of both parties, the results of which are due early in March, is seen as a formality after the two meetings and will put the final seal on the merger saga.

Iraqis hit Iran-bound freighter, Kharg tanker

BAHRAIN (Agencies) — Iraq said Sunday its fighter-bombers attacked two ships off Iran's Gulf coast in nine hours and shipping executives said a Panamanian freighter was later sighted on fire off Saudi Arabia.

The crew of the 15,241-ton Greek-owned Mare apparently abandoned ship, but their fate was not immediately known, the executives said.

The executives said the Mare's damage was similar to that caused by an Exocet missile, the type usually fired by Iraqi warplanes in raids on shipping.

They said Iraqi jets also attacked a supertanker near Iran's Kharg Island oil terminal. But they were not able to identify the vessel.

The freighter was en route to the Iranian port of Bushehr when it was hit, the executives reported.

It was spotted burning in the northern Gulf at mid-morning by the Bahamas-flag freighter Hoeg Forum about 80 kilometers east of Saudi Arabia and south of Al Arabiyah Island.

Sources quoted by Reuter in a despatch from Dubai said another ship in the vicinity, the Bahamas-flag Hoeg Forum, had not been able to establish what happened to the Mare crew.

Bahdad reported the two strikes within nine hours of each other Sunday morning, the first against a "very large naval

(Continued on page 3)

U.S. locked into large naval presence in Gulf, experts say

WASHINGTON (R) — Despite a Defence Department decision to slightly reduce the U.S. fleet in the Gulf region, analysts say the United States is locked into keeping a major force of warships there for the foreseeable future.

"That presence has clearly made Iran very cautious and I think we are stuck with a substantial force there for a considerable time unless the Iran-Iraq war ends," former Defence Secretary Harold Brown told Reuters.

He and other experts said they felt the Reagan administration and other allied navies were accomplishing a major goal by letting Gulf states such as Saudi Arabia and Kuwait know they need not be intimidated by Tehran.

"I have felt for the last couple of months it was time for us to lower the temperature somewhat in the Gulf. This (reduction) is a modest step in that direction,"

Iraq, Iran work together to fight Gulf pollution

ABU DHABI (R) — Bitter enemies Iran and Iraq are working together to conquer a common foe, marine pollution — mainly caused by their own attacks on shipping.

At war since 1980, Baghdad and Tehran are members of the Regional Organisation for the Protection of Marine Environment (ROPME).

And delegates from both sides agreed pollution accidents would be significantly cut if attacks on shipping in the Gulf ceased.

"In ROPME we do not clash... our talks are always constructive and all members work in unison," said Arfan Zaki, director of the organisation's Bahrain centre.

Zaki, from Iraq, was in the UAE — the headquarters of the group — to oversee the three-day ROPME seminar on combatting marine pollution. His centre in Bahrain coordinates anti-pollution action in the area, home to nearly two-thirds of the world's known oil reserves.

Both the Iranian and Iraqi delegates find no problem exchanging views on clearing up the mess caused by the overspill in their countries' bitter war.

Said Iraqi delegate Dr. Safiya Kalidar: "I can't see any reason why we should not exchange views and cooperate since pollution is a humanitarian problem," she said.

Iranian delegate Cirous Fayaz Zadeh agreed: "It is a humanitarian rather than a political prob-

said Brown, who served in the Carter administration and is now chairman of the Foreign Policy Institute at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies.

Administration officials have told Reuters the navy will remove the battleship Iowa and the helicopter carrier Okinawa from the Gulf region in mid-February to save part of the \$20 million monthly cost of the force.

The Pentagon faces lower budgets and wants to cut expenses for the Gulf fleet, built up since President Reagan's decision last year to protect 11 Kuwaiti tankers and other U.S. flag ships from attack in the Iran-Iraq war

zone.

But reducing that fleet by up to four warships, a plan authorised by Defence Secretary Frank Carlucci, would leave at least 27 U.S. Navy vessels including an aircraft carrier in the region.

"If you say you're going to protect American flag shipping and if you make clear you will retaliate against attack, then you have to have the forces available to back that up," said one senior Pentagon official, who asked not to be identified.

Bernard Reich, a political science professor and analyst at George Washington University, agreed with Brown that President Reagan began boasting the U.S. presence in the Gulf last summer in part to keep Soviet influence from growing in the region.

"We also built up in great part because we were stinging from the Iran arms sales and we needed to assure other Gulf

states that we were not taking sides with Iran in the war," said Reich.

"We are showing that we can have a sustained policy in the region, which we badly needed."

Defence officials have told Reuters that the Iowa, stationed in the northern Arabian Sea, and the Okinawa, which is in the Gulf, were no longer needed and would be brought home without being replaced.

The Iowa, armed with long-range cruise missiles and carrying a crew of 1,500, is expected to sail for its homeport of Norfolk, Virginia, about Feb. 18 along with a cruiser and a destroyer.

The Okinawa, with a complement of mine-hunting helicopters no longer needed in the region because of the presence of U.S. and other minesweeping ships, is scheduled to leave for San Diego, California, a few days later.

The Pentagon faces lower budgets and wants to cut expenses for the Gulf fleet, built up since President Reagan's decision last year to protect 11 Kuwaiti tankers and other U.S. flag ships from attack in the Iran-Iraq war

zone.

The dangers last year resulted in 185 confirmed marine accidents, most of which were caused by Gulf war attacks, according to Zaki.

And fresh "dangers" emerged even as the seminar went on. Last Wednesday a military spokesman in Baghdad said Iraqi jets had carried out their third attack on shipping in 38 hours — with Iran's oil shuttle tankers the usual target.

Established in the early 1980s shortly after the war broke out, the regional organisation also includes Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Oman, Kuwait, and Qatar.

Since then, according to Lloyds Shipping Intelligence, nearly 450 ships have been damaged in the hostilities.

But Zaki said setting up ROPME was not prompted solely by these attacks.

"The idea surfaced much earlier, even before the war broke out and was motivated by recurrent waste-dumping by merchant vessels. The Gulf war only accelerated its establishment."

Iran and Iraq are also members in the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), but have used the group's meetings to underscore further their unity.

"Here all sides cast aside their

political differences and give attention to the pollution problem which all states of the region should tackle," Zaki said.

Pointing to attacks on oil tankers as the chief cause of marine pollution in the Gulf, he added:

"But we should not ignore other factors like waste dumping by scores of ships plying the Gulf waters. There should be a kind of monitoring like patrols by regional states."

He said the most serious pollution accident occurred in 1983, when Iraqi warplanes struck Iran's Noruz Oilfield. The attack caused a huge oil slick that spread to the waters of most neighbour-

ing Gulf countries.

"Ironically Iraq took part in a ROPME meeting in Kuwait later to look into ways to stem the slick by capping the oilfield," Zaki said. "But unfortunately, the meeting was inconclusive."

Pollution levels still did not pose a threat to marine ecology as "occasional slicks gradually melt away," he said.

And as the envoys of two warring nations work to fight slicks, one delegate observed: "It is ridiculous that the two combatants can see the dangers of pollution while they turn a blind eye on the dangers of the war."

"Damascus will not accept becoming a scapegoat. It refuses any compromise or procrastination in the issue," said the source. "Syria will spare no effort to deter any attempt to tarnish its image as a main power broker in Lebanon."

Khartoum also said Iranians were among the 25 foreign hostages held in Lebanon and demanded that their cases be tackled with the same respect.

Abdul Hadi Hamadi's brother Abbas Ali is on trial in Dusseldorf on charges of involvement in kidnapping two West Germans in west Beirut a year ago.

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Minister of Transport and Telecommunications Khaled Al Haj Hassan Sunday meets with Director-General of the Civil Aviation Authority Mahmoud Balqez (left) and Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Egyptian Civil Aviation Corporation Ali Othman Ziko for talks on bilateral cooperation in air transport and tourism (Petra photo)

Jordan, Egypt discuss air transport links

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan and Egypt Sunday opened talks on promoting bilateral cooperation in air transport and tourism.

The Jordanian side to the three-day meeting is led by Director-General of the Civil Aviation Authority (JVA) Mahmoud Balqez, while the Egyptian side is led by Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Egyptian Civil Aviation Corporation Ali Othman Ziko.

Balqez and Ziko are accompanied by officials from their departments in the talks which are a continuation of negotiations held

by the two sides in Cairo in 1986, and in implementation of resolutions by the Joint Jordanian-Egyptian Higher Committee.

Balqez and Ziko later called on Minister of Transport and Telecommunications Khaled Haj Hassan and briefed him on the topics to be discussed at the meeting. Haj Hassan underlined the need for promoting integration between Jordan and Egypt in all fields, and expressed hope that the two sides would make new steps in Jordanian-Egyptian air transport cooperation.

Japan allocates first part of \$300m soft loan

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Japanese Fund for Overseas Economic Assistance has agreed in principle to finance a number of projects in Jordan at a cost of JD 25 million, according to Secretary-General of the Ministry of Public Works Khalaf Huwari.

Agreement was reached Sunday during a meeting between Huwari and a delegation representing the Japanese fund. Dis-

cussions during the meeting centred on the implementation of these projects which includes dams, roads and irrigation canals.

The two sides agreed that work on these projects would begin before the end of the year.

Japanese embassy sources said that the JD 25 million is part of a \$300 million soft loan to Jordan approved by the Japanese government last October.

King begins talks in Rome

(Continued from page 1)

latest issue of the West German *Der Spiegel* magazine, the King reaffirmed Jordan's stand that U.N. Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 should be the basis for convening the international conference since the two U.N. documents enshrine the inadmissibility of acquisition of land by force.

In the interview, which was conducted in Amman Wednesday, the King said the problem was not the issue of the Arab lands occupied since 1967 but the need to find a solution to the Palestinian problem in all its aspects. The King said the proposed international conference should be held under U.N. auspices with the participation of the five permanent members of the Security Council and all parties involved in the Arab-Israeli conflict, including the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO). He said attendance at the conference should be contingent on acceptance of Resolutions 242 and 338, renunciation of violence and acceptance of a solution to the Palestinian problem in all its dimensions and aspects.

Joint delegation

On the possibility of a joint Jordanian-PLO delegation to the proposed peace conference, the King said Jordan was still acting in accordance with the Feb. 11, 1985 agreement between the Kingdom and the PLO. The agreement, he noted, had crystallised the idea of a joint delegation.

The King added that it was Jordan which proposed the international conference and he emphasised the need for convening it, giving the Palestinians the opportunity to participate in the search for solution to their problem. Jordan proposed inviting the PLO to the called-for conference on equal footing with Jordan and provided the ground for forming a joint Jordanian-PLO delegation, the King said.

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Prior to the King's departure, Crown Prince Hassan was sworn in as Regent. The Crown Prince returned to Amman earlier Sunday at the end of a visit to Switzerland where he led Jordan's delegation to the 1988 World Economic Forum and met with a number of world economic and political figures.

Returning with Prince Hassan was the Jordanian delegation that accompanied him to Davos.

Mubarak arrives in Paris

(Continued from page 1)

Washington, U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz repeated the U.S. position that the way to achieve peace in the Middle East was through direct talks, and said the United States would pursue any avenue to achieve them, including an international conference.

"In the past, Israel used to say that it was looking for a partner to negotiate with. Today, it is evident that this partner is there," Mubarak said Saturday.

In Washington, a Mubarak aide dismissed new proposals for Palestinian "autonomy" by Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir as "gimmicks."

Speaking to Israel Radio's correspondent in the U.S. capital, Mubarak's political adviser, Osama Al Baz, said Shamir's ideas were unacceptable to the Arabs. He will play an important role to

Cabinet approves modifications of water, Jordan Valley authorities

AMMAN (Petra) — The Cabinet announced Sunday its endorsement of a draft amendment to laws on the Water Authority of Jordan (WAJ) and the Jordan Valley Authority (JVA).

According to the two amendments, the WAJ and JVA will no longer be linked to the prime minister's office; instead, the two authorities will be connected with the Ministry of Water and Irrigation, and a board of directors will be set up to govern them. Minister of Water and Irrigation Ahmad Dakhaq will be chairman of this board, according to the announcement.

The Ministry of Water and Irrigation, the announcement added, will supervise the drilling of private artesian wells and organise the exploitation of under-

ground water resources, as well as study and carry out water and sewerage projects.

The board of directors will include the minister as chairman of the board and the secretaries general of the ministries of planning, agriculture, municipal affairs, health, industry and trade, the directors general of the Budget Department and the secretaries general of the WAJ and JVA.

According to the Cabinet announcement, the JVA amendment cancels the post of JVA president, with the president becoming secretary general. In addition, the authority will be reshuffled and reorganised.

Dudin explains slow pace in aid to occupied territories, foresees quicker spending

By John Rice
Associated Press

AMMAN — The official in charge of Jordan's aid to Palestinians under Israeli occupation Saturday outlined the assistance programme and promised larger projects to come.

"We are not spending quickly because the recipients are not consuming quickly" due to lack of familiarity with programme guidelines, Minister of Occupied Territories Affairs Marwan Dudin told AP.

Jordan last year launched a proposed \$1 billion five-year programme of aid to the West Bank and Gaza Strip, aimed at pumping in money to help Palestinians resist economic pressures to leave their lands.

Palestinian frustration erupted in early December in a seven-week-long wave of demonstrations and clashes with Israeli forces in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

The Jordanian government has not yet received all the outside donations it sought for the programme. The United States contributed \$4.5 million and promised \$14 million more this year.

Jordan budgeted JD 10 million of its own money to the effort.

Dudin said Jordan spent JD 3 million on West Bank projects during the seven months of the programme last year, in addition to roughly JD 4 million for social welfare programmes.

He said the government hoped to spend the leftover JD 2 million and the new JD 10 million this year.

But Dudin noted that Jordanian officials, who receive much of their budget in foreign grants "are not always sure that the

money that comes from other sources in the form of grants will be coming," hinting that a shortfall could affect his spending plans.

The minister said he was avoiding in the first year anything that was really big, because he wanted to give recipients and the Jordanian committees overseeing them "enough training to do things properly."

He said larger plans were scheduled for 1988, including a JD 1.25 million feasibility study for a Gaza water system, a JD 350,000 vocational college near Jenin and JD 350,000 industrial park for Ramallah.

Dudin said administrative and business skills had eroded during the Israeli occupation, and Jordan hoped its programme would develop them, thus speeding spending.

"In 20 years of occupation, entrepreneurship in the acceptable sense of the word is not there. You have small contractors, people who can do things and take five times more (time than) what an entrepreneur who is a capable contractor can do," he said.

But Dudin added, "we create jobs, work opportunities, better water systems, better electricity systems, better roads... We help in the building of schools, especially in the villages."

He said Israeli procedures sometimes delay projects, and Jordan also continues to aid workers who went on strike when Israel seized the lands 20 years ago. That includes JD 300,000 every two months for lawyers and JD 175,000 yearly for Jerusalem municipal workers. Director of Development and Planning for the Occupied Territories Saadallah said.



Heavy rainfall heralds healthy harvest season

AMMAN (Petra) — Director-General of the Meteorology Department Ali Abada Sunday said that the first 40 days of winter season had been characterised by relatively cold temperatures during the day and warmer-than-average temperatures at night.

Abada attributed the relative warmth at night to the formation of clouds and rainfall.

However, he added, there were 22 rainy days during the season's first 40 days (Dec. 21-Jan. 31), compared with average number of rainy days (10-14) for the period.

The rainfall was good throughout the Kingdom, particularly in the southern and eastern regions, heralding a healthy harvest season, Abada said.

The heaviest rainfall was in the Salt region, where accumulated rainfall was 406 mm, followed by Ajloun where the accumulated rainfall was 398 mm.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Prince Mohammad meets with Rifai

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Prince Mohammad, the personal representative of His Majesty King Hussein, Sunday had a meeting with Prime Minister Zaid Rifai at the prime minister's office.

NAF aid benefits needy in Salt

SALT (Petra) — The National Aid Fund (NAF) branch here last year distributed a total of JD 104,136 to 424 needy families, according to Director of the Salt Social Development Department Khaled Ghneim. He said that his department conducted studies on 15 needy families who needed urgent help and offered them a total of JD 1,170.

Jordan to take part in Islamic panel

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan will take part in the fourth meeting on Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh) which will open in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia Saturday. The week-long meeting will discuss the question of zakat (alms to the poor) and a number of other religious issues. Jordan will be represented at the meeting by Secretary-General of the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Abdul Salam Al Abbadi and Director of Haram Al Sharif Sheikh Mohammad Abu Shaqra.

Iraqis hit Iran-linked ships

(Continued from page 1) might have prevented Iran from retaliating for the Iraqi attacks.

Reporters last Friday watched a U.S. and a French frigate circle an Iranian warship when it stopped and questioned the Yugoslav cargo ship Dvar 25 kilometres north of Dubai. The Iranians allowed the Dvar to proceed.

Western diplomatic sources said lulls in Iranian and Iraqi attacks were often due to international diplomatic moves or were the result of domestic changes in military or political planning.

Sharaa criticises Iraq

Syrian Foreign Minister Farouq Al Sharaa criticised Iraq Sunday for attacking Syrian efforts to promote contacts between Iran and Arab Gulf states, Tehran Radio reported.

The radio said Sharaa left Tehran Sunday after delivering a message from Syrian President Hafez Al Assad to President Ali Khamenei, and discussing "important regional issues and Persian Gulf developments" with Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati.

It said Khamenei described relations as "good and very sincere."

Sharaa told the radio there was agreement on the need to ease tension in the region and promote friendly ties between Iran and Gulf Arabs.

Baath's government-controlled media attacked Damascus last week for its attempt to bring together Iran and the Arab Gulf states, which generally support Iraq in the seven-year-old war. "We are surprised that Iraqi officials make such moves against

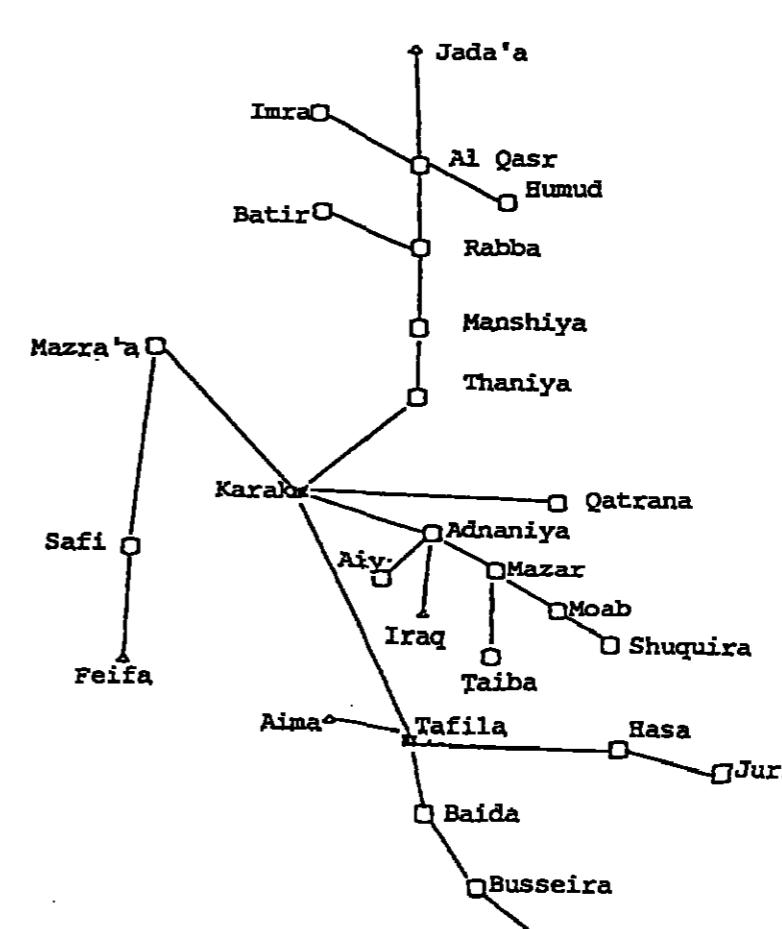
U.S. said suggesting 'self-rule'

(Continued from page 1) to happen after the period of the autonomy will bring both parties to the same differences that exist all the time," he said.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's Likud bloc opposes returning any of the lands occupied in the 1967 war to Arab sovereignty.

Foreign Minister Shimon Peres's Labour Party favours "territorial compromise" as part of a settlement. Israel Radio said Shamir told

To the Telecommunications Corporation: CONGRATULATIONS ON THE INAUGURATION OF The South Rural Telephone Network



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OBITUARY

The Department of Antiquities, the Planning Committee of the Conferences of the History and Archaeology of Jordan, and the Friends of Archaeology sadly announce the death of:

Dr. Denis Baly

Professor of Biblical and Historical Geography of the Near East at Kenyon College, Gambier, Ohio, USA. Dr. Baly was a prominent scholar and a man who loved Jordan and its people. He will be much missed by all his friends and fellow scholars.

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Zionist wheels in motion

THE Palestinian uprising in the occupied West Bank and Gaza also appears to have given rise to a systematic anti-Jordanian campaign in the United States aimed at distorting the Kingdom's image. The motivations behind the drive, which shows all hallmarks of hardcore Zionism, are not difficult to guess; they seek to put Jordan in as unfavourable a light as possible, so that the Jordanian call for a just and durable settlement to the Arab-Israeli conflict and Palestinian problem is blunted and the focus is shifted to what is described as Jordan's "unrealised demands." Some Zionist leaders are feeding the information media with allegations that Jordan's rejection of direct talks with Israel drove the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza to take things into their own hands; hence, the ongoing revolt in the occupied territories. Much more surprising is the way respected American newspapers have joined the bandwagon, leading the smearing campaign.

Notwithstanding the liberal use of empty words of "sympathy" for the Palestinian people, it is clear that Zionist circles in the U.S. find it a golden opportunity to throw mud at Jordan, accusing it of adopting a "negative" attitude towards peace efforts, and portray Israel as the ultimate peace-loving nation. For them, the Jordanian rejection of the American proposal for a direct meeting with Israel during last December's superpower summit was a total rejection of peace talks; thus, they see Jordan as bearing a great responsibility for what is happening in the occupied territories. They try to entice Jordan into an elaborate political trap, and then they cry foul when we refuse to take the bait.

Still, the international community and intelligent and reasonable Americans know that the kind of peace the Zionists are trying to propagate is nothing but an eyewash, and that Jordan was not deviating an inch from its principled stand when it rejected the offer to meet with Israel in Washington.

We suspect, though, that the masterminds behind the ongoing anti-Jordanian drive have not wasted their energies. In their zealous drive, they appear to have gone out of their way, albeit accurately and unintentionally, to convey the message of the Palestinian plight to the American public and underline the urgent need for a Middle East settlement. After all, the effort was not totally wasted. We can only give them a piece of advice: All those "missed opportunities for peace" that you are talking about could never have brought peace to the Middle East, and were just the recipes for further turmoil and instability in the region. Jordan was wise to have sensed the trap from the beginning, and you would now be better off focusing on what Israel, happy to continue the status quo, has been doing to wreck all hopes for peace.

ARABIC PRESS EDITORIALS

Al Ra'i: Israel's nuclear threat

HIS Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan delivered an extremely important address to the 1988 World Economic Forum on Saturday drawing the world community's attention to the fact that regional conflicts could result in an all out world confrontation. He said if U.N. Security Council resolutions on the Middle East were not implemented, and if the Iran-Iraq war was not halted, no one could predict the consequences. Prince Hassan referred to Israel and said it is a nuclear power which has not signed a treaty to restrict its nuclear capability, and which is pursuing aggressive policies in the Arab region. At present Israel is involved in using the Jewish faith as a tool in its fight against the Arab people in general and the Palestinians in particular. Israel's plans and policies the Prince said, could lead to a major confrontation in the Middle East endangering world peace. Prince Hassan was careful to remind the world community that the recent Amman Arab summit reached resolutions that supported an international peace conference which would end the conflict and bring about a lasting peace. He also said that Jordan was shouldering a heavy burden trying to defend Arab soil and seeking peace based on justice; and struggling to regain for the Palestinians their legitimate rights in their homeland. The Prince's address which dealt with all issues in our region should open the eyes of world nations to the reality in the Middle East and Israel's practices, and prompt them to work for peace.

Al Dustour: Prince warns of regional conflicts

REGIONAL conflicts and the situation in the Middle East were the focus of an address by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland Saturday. The Prince drew world attention to the fact that after 40 years of struggle the Arabs and the Israelis have not yet reached peace and that the Gulf conflict which has been raging for the past eight years seems to be going on without letup. These regional wars the Prince said have brought about many sufferings and caused heavy loss of life and material resources to no avail. Prince Hassan who criticised Israel's practices said that while the world is feeling optimistic about a reduction of nuclear weapons in Europe, the Middle East is set to face a nuclear threat because of Israel's ambitions and as the Jewish state continues to enlarge its nuclear arsenal without any restrictions. Israel he said now monopolises the nuclear arms in the Middle East and there exists no balance of terror that could deter it from launching a nuclear war on the Arabs. Referring to the current uprising in the Israeli occupied Arab land, Prince Hassan noted that it came about as a result of desperation in the hearts of the Arab people under Israeli oppression and as a show of determination for regaining freedom. The Prince emphasised the need for a lasting settlement of the Palestine problem and the Arab-Israeli conflict which could come through an international conference.

Sawt Al Shaab: U.S. stalls Security Council

SATURDAY the U.N. Security Council delayed taking any resolution concerning the situation in the occupied West Bank and the Gaza Strip. During the session and the debate the U.S. delegate was silent and did not reveal anything about Washington's reaction, nor did he show that the U.S. plans to take some action to defuse the situation or give momentum to the peace process. This attitude shows that the U.S. is totally biased towards Israel and accepts only the Israeli point of view, a stand it has displayed over the past 20 years of Israeli occupation. It is regrettable to see the U.S. succumbing to Israel's will and falling under Zionist pressure and extremist elements in the Israeli government. This attitude is disappointing to all, as King Hussein pointed out in his interview with the Washington Post and on U.S. television network. The King said clearly that the U.S. policies do not serve the interests of the American people, the Arabs, the Israelis and the peace process. The U.S. which is a superpower should act like one and contribute actively towards the establishment of peace.

Conceiving a political Arab party in Israel

By Waleed Sadi

THE Israeli Labour Party is clearly stunned by the decision of Abdul Wahab Darawsheh to quit the Labour Party and form his and his people's own independent political party. Whether Labour will ever recover from this devastating setback is something that cannot be gauged as yet. To be sure if came at the worst possible time for the Labour Party which was calling for advancing the date of the Israeli elections in order to cash in on the nippes generated by the latest Palestinian popular uprising. One would expect Mr. Shimon Peres, the leader of the Labour Party to conclude that he was too hasty in his plea for an earlier date for elections. Obviously, Mr. Peres wishes now that he had not embarked on such manoeuvring and accordingly no new calls for an earlier elections would be forthcoming from his side. He needs all the time the law allows him to recuperate from the severe wound that was dealt to him and his party by Mr. Darawsheh.

What is now uppermost on the minds of Middle East observers is whether such a development on the Israeli political scene would also end up being a severe blow and irreparable setback to the international peace conference idea, of which Mr. Peres was the clear advocate among the Israeli political ranks.

To begin with the Labour Party's political fortunes did not look bright even before the departure of Mr. Darawsheh. All the polls conducted in Israel of late point in the direction of another coalition government being in the offing. While opening new vistas for Palestinian perspectives within Israeli body politic; the Palestinian latest popular uprising also hardened the positions of Israeli hawks who resent giving in to Palestinian nationalism beyond consenting

grudgingly to some kind of self-rule at Camp David. The uprising in the West Bank and Gaza Strip seems also to have hardened their opposition to the international conference rather than soften it.

Secondly, the position of Mr. Shimon Peres as the leader of the Labour Party seems to have been undermined in the wake of the Palestinian uprising. The doves within and without the Labour Party seemed to have been disenchanted by Mr. Peres' muted and defensive handling of the Israeli oppressive measures and practices against the Palestinian people. It was made obvious on more than one occasion during the latest episode in the Palestinian struggle for liberty that Mr. Peres and General Yitzhak Rabin, another pillar in the Labour Party, and contender for the throne were on a collision course on many issues affecting the future of the peace process in the Middle East.

In the final analysis how the departure of Mr. Darawsheh from the Labour Party would affect the prospects for the international peace conference would depend on how many seats his projected new party could secure in the Knesset and how he plays his cards afterwards in the ensuing confrontation between the Labour and Likud parties. Being closely linked now to the political sentiments emerging in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and having made pretensions to speak on their behalf, Mr. Darawsheh's new party would most likely attempt to dictate not only his own version of the international conference but also the projected results of such a conference. This could end up becoming a double barrel setback to Mr. Peres and company.

Be that as it may, the Arabs of Israel have all the right for an independent political party to galvanise the some 320,000 Arab voters into a formidable political machine that the Israeli body politic would have to reckon with. Mr. Darawsheh has hinted that he and his people have been flirting with the idea of an independent political party for some time. The continued frustrations of the Arabs of Israel with the performance of the Labour Party on domestic and regional issues have driven them on more than one occasion up the wall. The latest manhandling of the Palestinian uprising by the Israeli occupying forces was the last straw that tipped the balance in favour of opting for an independent political path. It did not escape the attention of the Arabs of Israel that it was General Rabin, the Labourite minister of defence who orchestrated and executed the oppressive and inhuman way the Israeli troops attempted to quell the uprising in the West Bank and Gaza. The 320,000 Arab votes have yet to be tapped fully in favour of legitimate Arab causes especially those associated with the struggle of the Palestinian people in the occupied territories. It was only natural and logical that the Arabs of Israel would feel kinship and comradeship with their people across the so-called "Green Line" separating Israel from the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

All this leads one to the conclusion that the newly won independent Arab action on the Israeli political scene must be pursued and played very delicately and wisely lest the new Arab political machine frustrate the overriding Arab aspirations and objectives.

They've brought a new sense of urgency

'A generation that does not fear Israeli bullets'

By Hanna Siniora

FOR THE past few weeks the world's attention has been riveted on the territories occupied by Israel. The significance of what is happening is that the sacrifices of the post-1967 generation of Palestinian youth, paying the ultimate price — their lives — have achieved the seemingly impossible goal of rekindling interest in this long-festering conflict and bringing the Palestinian issue back to the top of the world's agenda.

Various forces had conspired to downgrade the Palestinian problem: The success of the Israeli political body in preserving the status quo, the emergence of the Gulf war as the Arab countries' top priority and the indifference of the international community to a situation put on hold.

Today, thanks to the generation now coming of age, a generation that does not fear Israeli bullets, we have a whole new situation. There has been a rude awakening not only of Israel's public opinion but of the lethargic, complacent political establishment.

Israelis have made the traditional response in the first weeks of the disturbances: Closing of ranks, a right-wing radicalisation of attitudes, more repressive measures and widespread use of the "iron fist" policies, regardless of human rights infringements. But at the same time there has developed a new sense of urgency, a feeling that the continued occupation by force of 1.5 million Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza cannot continue.

The ultimate goal of the uprising is to end the occupation and achieve a separate Palestinian identity based on an independent Palestinian state in the areas occupied by Israel since June 1967.

The first steps have been taken: The status quo has been broken, and the Palestinian case

is back in the forefront of world issues. Yet the long-term effort to achieve a political settlement is just slowly starting.

What is needed in this situation is to discard the conventional, the traditional methods that have not worked in the past. Mubarak, to succeed, must be unorthodox — not committed to a specific way, yet committed to a consensus.

And long and difficult as that effort may prove to be, one thing should be realised from the start: That such a settlement is in the long-term interests of both Israelis and Palestinians. It will put an end to a long history of conflict that began in the early 1900s, and will be the prelude to a new era of economic cooperation and friendly relations. That is what will happen if we can wisely translate this new situation into a new political reality, and by "we" I mean both Palestinians and Israelis. Not only the region will benefit, but also the cause of world peace, at least to the extent that a settlement eases friction between the two superpowers.

To keep attention focused on the situation while the negotiating process advances, a new tool has been introduced into the arena. Whether it is called nonviolent resistance to the occupation, civil disobedience or — probably the most appropriate term — national disobedience, it is important for several reasons.

One is the influence it can have on Israeli opinion. As I have noted, there has in recent weeks been an Israeli backlash caused by the disturbances — a right-wing radicalisation. This is an election year in Israel, and if

changes are to be sought in the policies of the Israeli government, there have to be changes in Israeli attitudes toward the emergence of a Palestinian state. Thus the Israeli grass roots, the Israeli voter, has to be talked to, positively influenced. Such a campaign can do this, because it can also be a campaign the Israeli peace camp can join in through joint demonstrations, sit-ins, meetings and other forms of non-violent action.

Another effect of the disobedience campaign is economic. Certain measures are intended to make the continued holding of the territories unprofitable. One is asking Palestinians to shrink the second biggest Israeli export market (after the United States) by encouraging equivalent local products: a "buy Palestinian" campaign is emerging and other measures are being considered, such as legally not paying taxes.

The political options are many and varied, yet all lead to negotiations under an international conference. In this regard, some action by the superpowers will be essential. Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze, for example, recently urged before the U.N. Security Council the convening of an international conference under terms of a preparatory arrangement made by the council's five permanent members.

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Israeli army violates human, health rights of besieged Palestinians

The following is an open letter sent early January to world health and humanitarian institutions from Arab institutions in the West Bank and Gaza Strip:

WE, healthcare institutions in the occupied West Bank and Gaza, wish to alert you to the Israeli army's violations of the human and health rights of the population in the occupied territories, including clear violations of the Fourth Geneva Convention. During the past month, under the guise of "security" — to suppress the mass uprisings that call for the end of Israeli military occupation and the right of self-determination of Palestinian people — a large number of Palestinian health and medical institutions were subjected to invasion and harassment by the Israeli military. Physicians and nurses were harassed and were stopped from performing their duty of providing the necessary medical and first aid care to the wounded. Some health professionals were even subjected to beating and other forms of physical violence. Wounded civilians were also attacked by the Israeli army.

During this period the following incidents were recorded:

1. Large numbers of Israeli soldiers attacked Shifa Hospital in Gaza three times.
2. During December 15 and 18 of 1987 alone, no less than 100 tear gas canisters were thrown around and inside the Shifa Hospital. On these two days, Israeli soldiers shot and killed three people in the immediate vicinity of the hospital.
3. The army forced a number of patients to leave Shifa and other hospitals in Gaza and the West Bank against their will and the advice of their physicians. These wounded individuals were then driven to detention centres, despite the fact that their condition clearly required medical care and close medical supervision.
4. The army subjected Maqassed Hospital in Jerusalem to attacks with tear gas canisters on December 19, 1987, leading to serious complications among some of the patients, especially in the neonatal ward.
5. The army stopped a number of ambulances from transporting the injured, including incidents in the Gaza Strip, at Hebron University, and in other areas of the West Bank. Such military obstruction of the transport of the wounded is in clear violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention. Some ambulances were stopped from transporting seriously injured patients, as occurred when soldiers delayed an ambulance attempting to transport the critically-injured Mayssara Al Bitnei, who later died of his injuries. In other cases, ambulances and their drivers were detained at police stations, as happened to ambulances belonging to the Red Crescent Society in Hebron when they were in the process of transporting the wounded out of Al Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem on December 18, 1987.
6. The Israeli military cordoned off Al Ittihad Hospital in Nablus on December 11, 1987 and obstructed individuals wishing to donate blood to save the injured. The Israeli military continues to cordon off Shifa Hospital in Gaza.
7. The Israeli army indiscriminately employed thousands of canisters of a new, and more potent kind of tear gas, leading to very serious and immediate complications, and possible serious long term effects.

The actions of the Israeli army described above are clear violations of the most basic medical and, indeed, human standards and must be condemned by all those in the international community concerned with human rights, and should be of particular concern to healthcare professionals and institutions.

We the representatives of the medical and health institutions of the Israeli-occupied territories thus appeal to world public opinion and to health and medical institutions to condemn such actions and to place immediate and strong pressure on the Israeli government and its embassies and representatives all over the world to immediately refrain from:

1. The use of live ammunition against unarmed civilians.
2. The indiscriminate use of tear gas against unarmed civilians.
3. Harassing health and medical institutions, ambulances and their staff and attempting to stop them from performing their duties.

4. Cordonning off hospitals and harassing patients.

5. Raiding hospitals and medical facilities and impeding the process of delivering first aid and emergency medical care.

6. Arresting the wounded and injured.

We also call for the immediate release of all injured prisoners currently in detention who are in need of medical care.

Signatories

1. Arab Medical Society — Gaza Strip
2. Union of Palestinian Medical Relief Committees — West Bank and Gaza Strip
3. Union of Pharmacists — West Bank
4. Palestinian Councilling Centre
5. Maqassed Islamic Charitable Hospital — Jerusalem
6. Community Health Unit — Birzeit University
7. Central Committee of the Red Crescent Societies of the West Bank and Gaza Strip
8. Blood Bank Society — Gaza Strip
9. Palestine Red Crescent Society — Gaza Strip
10. Union of Dentists — Hebron Branch
11. Patients Friends Society — Hebron
12. Red Crescent Society — Hebron
13. Union of Pharmacists — Hebron
14. Union of Physicians — Tulkarm Branch
15. Union of Dentists — Tulkarm Branch
16. Union of Pharmacists — Tulkarm Branch
17. Red Crescent Society — Tulkarm Branch
18. Patients Friends Society — Tulkarm Branch
19. Union of Physicians — Nablus Branch
20. Tadamon Polyclinic — Nablus
21. Union of Pharmacists — Nablus Branch
22. Union of Dentists — Nablus Branch
23. Union of Pharmacists — Ramallah Branch
24. Patients Friends Society — Ramallah Branch
25. Union of Dentists — Ramallah Branch
26. Union of Physicians — Bethlehem Branch
27. Patients Friends Society — Bethlehem
28. Patients Friends Society — Nablus
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Regional conflicts: Why they must be of concern to the world

Israel introduced nuclear terror to the Middle East

The following is the full text of an address that His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan made on Saturday at the World Economic Forum annual meeting in Davos, Switzerland.

CONFLICT is one of the oldest phenomena known to man. It is as old as time itself. And so is its resolution. Man found himself in conflict with his own environment, and with his fellow man. Whether the emergence of a General Will, the Dialectics, or the establishment of a Leviathan, man learnt to resolve his conflicts. He evolved means and procedures for conflict-resolution. Had he not the 17th Century English philosopher, Thomas Hobbes, tells us there would have been "no arts; no letters; no society; and which is worst of all; continual fear and danger of violent death; and the life of man, solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short." That was the view of the dangers of continued conflict in the 17th Century. In the modern age, chastened by the long experience of wars and hopefully more rational, is it not even more crucial that we be concerned with regional conflicts? They are the most likely source to precipitate a general conflagration which only few of us would survive.

In Europe, where the threat of the dreaded nuclear winter has loomed large for the last forty years, a number of diplomatic rules are laid so that a clash between NATO and the Warsaw Pact could be averted. These rules are observed and maintained and peace has been kept. In the South West Asian region, commonly referred to as the Middle East, conditions are unstable. The situation in its three hotspots is explosive, and no civilised ground rules exist. The peoples of the region live what may best be described as the "dialogue of the deaf." The Palestine problem has expended the energies of three generations of Hashemite rulers. The Gulf war in its eighth year has taken toll of upwards of a million lives. The majority of human casualties in the Lebanon over the past decade or more have been civilian. There are wars in the Nile valley, in Chad, in the Maghreb and in Afghanistan. These flash points, in which the superpowers are involved, fall in and out of NATO and Warsaw Pact region. The irony is that the loss of life on the grand scale to which I have referred is a direct byproduct of the game of nations and could easily spark global confrontation.

South West Asia is one of the most important regions of the world because of its geo-strategic position and its enormous natural resources. However, the language used in political exchanges, the attitudes held and the values cherished, make it impossible to have an acceptable code of conduct. It was in search of this code of conduct that in Geneva in 1983 Jordan worked for the launching of a search for an international humanitarian will ranging from concern for street children to alarm over nuclear winter. In November of last year we presented to the Secretary General of the United Nations the report of the International Commission.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

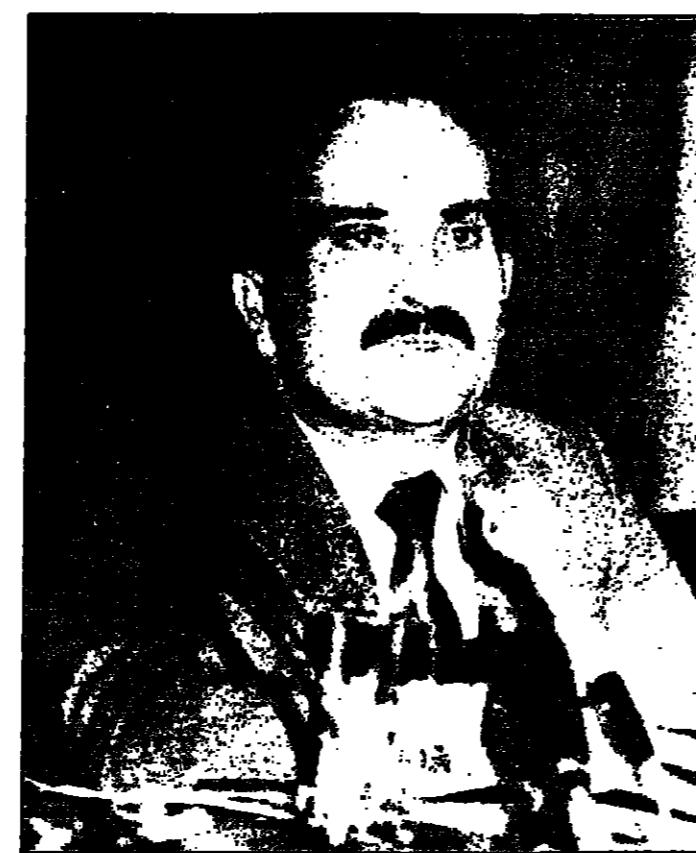
For the resolution of all major international crises, sights are turned to Geneva and it is our fervent hope that Geneva would be the venue for an international peace conference on the Middle East. It has long been recognised that regional conflicts have implications beyond the immediate adversaries. These conflicts threaten the stability and security of the entire region. It is clear that their escalation poses a threat to the whole region. The rest of the world cannot remain immune to their ramifications. War by its very nature inflicts a form of psychotomatic paralysis which invites further attrition and loss of life. Left without redress, grievances fester. They come to have what Sir Geoffrey Howe called a "brutalising effect" on both the individual and the community. It gives rise to polarisation which undermines the very fabric of newly emergent polities with fragmentation and eventual disintegration.

The conflict in the Middle East today is not simply between a number of nation-states; it is essentially against the nation-state. It is a war of attrition which seeks to erode the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the current system. The objective is extremely radical, the means are drastic, and the outcome will, no doubt, be to the detriment of all concerned. The aim is to reduce these entities to their component parts so that the only triumphant strand will be politico-religious fundamentalism: Islamic, Christian and Jewish. The peoples of the three monotheistic faiths will be engaged in wars of a bygone age but with extremely modern and highly sophisticated weaponry. Religious fundamentalism is no panacea. It solves no problems, but for people who are left

in a state of limbo, without hope and hardly an expectation, it provides motivation for action. More often than not, it is violent action which produces a similar response; thus the vicious circle of violence and counter-violence. Israel, as the occupying power in Gaza, the West Bank and Jerusalem is experiencing that, allowing the proclaimed Jewish values to be severely questioned.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Peace and stability in the Middle East are of paramount importance to the international community as well as to the peoples of the region. Self-interest,



Jordan occupies the first defence line for the Arab World in the conflict with Israel. In strategic terms we bear the burden of the forward position, both in war and in peace; and we have borne that responsibility with honour and pride.

mounting pressures to cut the conflict short may lead the Israeli political leadership to favour the use of their nuclear arsenal. Under these circumstances there is no guarantee that an operation of this kind would not convince the superpowers to intervene. The other situation which may cause a nuclear war is the deployment and use of increasingly sophisticated missiles of mass destruction by the protagonists which could invite nuclear retaliation under the intense domestic political pressure to render the state safe and secure.

A by-product of the INF treaty will be to place Israel's nuclear capability into sharper focus in the planning of American global strategy. It is bound to intensify the close strategic alliance between the two countries, whereby the United States will not be committed only to the defence of Israel's security, but to the maintenance and reinforcement of its nuclear arsenal. Thus while all intermediate nuclear forces will be eliminated from the European theatre, Israel's nuclear weapons will still be deployed and could be used for the defence of southern Europe. By virtue of its relationship with the U.S., Israel will become an auxiliary member of NATO, without having to be subject to the rules and regulations governing the alliance. This paradoxical anomaly offers Israel a certain degree of freedom in the procurement, the deployment and use of various weapon systems, including nuclear ones.

Israel apart, the superpowers maintain a nuclear presence in the region. Until the INF treaty is ratified, the U.S. has these weapons in Turkey. Even after the ratification of the treaty American nuclear weapons will remain aboard nuclear-armed submarines in and around the waters of the South West Asian region. The Soviet Union is on the borders of the region. In 1973 the superpowers almost clashed. There is nothing to suggest that it could not happen again. Political alignments and personalities have changed since then, and so have the military capabilities of many nations, but the fundamental elements of the situation have not been dramatically altered. Divergent perceptions and assessments of the situation in 1973 led them to the nuclear brink. Since then they have shown a marked inability to influence their regional allies or control the pace of deterioration in the course of any particular conflict. Both super-

powers have dealt with why it should be of concern to the world. What I have not done is to indicate how this concern has been positively translated into moves, measures and proposals, in both the political and economic spheres, to avert the dangers. Admittedly we have not had much success so far, but nonetheless we have been terribly active to deal with the menacing situation.

The multiplicity of conflicts in our region, and the constant threat of a wider conflagration, have served to strengthen our belief in the desirability of a just and durable peace. Our commitment to this pursuit is total and absolute. My country's unique geo-political location has heightened our awareness of the pivotal regional role we play, and of the particular need for security. It has imposed a disproportionately heavy responsibility for our own national defence and Arab regional security. Jordan occupies the first defence line for the Arab World in the conflict with Israel. In strategic terms we bear the burden of the forward position, both in war and in peace; and we have borne that responsibility with honour and pride.

The Amman Arab Summit Conference held in November of last year has provided support and encouragement to persist in our endeavour for a peaceful settlement to the Arab-Israeli conflict and the Gulf war. It has marked a turning point in the history of inter-Arab relations. The evolving patterns of interdependence and the complementarities between the various parts of the Arab polity, in terms of interests and resources, both political and economic, are to be deployed for the common good of all. Differences in perceptions and expectations may exist but they are to be transcended in favour of collective security, beneficial to all.

The Arab League's Committee of Eight, under the Chairmanship of the Algerian Finance Minister, Mr. Abdelfaziz Khelef, entrusted a group of experts to assess the work of the ailing regional agencies dealing with social and economic cooperation among the member states. Jordan has played a constructive role in the attempts to evolve a new approach in this field. His Majesty King Hussein, in his capacity as Chairman of the last Arab Summit, participated in the deliberations of the Committee when it met in Amman earlier this month. He called on the Committee to address the problem with candour and realism, and pledged his full support to this endeavour.

There is no doubt that a fresh sense of realism is taking hold in the Arab World. The politics of empty rhetoric is being overshadowed by a more pragmatic approach to our common problems.

The emerging patterns of regional cooperation can be extended and widened to involve Europe within a Eurasian framework.

ties to the dispute will participate.

It will also be attended by the five permanent members of the Security Council. This proposal has been supported and accepted by all except a faction in the Israeli government and some circles in the United States. The sooner this conference is convened the quicker the misery and oppression of the Palestinian Arabs can be lifted.

Superpower cooperation and the unanimous vote on U.N. Security Council resolution 598 to end the Gulf war was also welcomed by the Arab leaders at the Amman Summit. It is rather refreshing to see that the U.N. peace machinery is given a new lease of life. The agreement of the two superpowers is a measure of their recognition that the war in the Gulf poses the most immediate threat to world peace.

Their cooperation has injected a fresh impetus in the work of the world body, and has given us all hope that the superpowers have at last agreed to tackle world problems earnestly. American-Soviet collaboration in this field is long overdue. Our hopes and expectations are that the spirit of their new approach will continue to prosper and succeed.

It is imperative that there should be no complacency and no more delay in the implementation of the U.N. resolutions to resolve the conflicts in the Middle East. Consensus and unanimity should not be an end in itself. It offers the world a marvellous opportunity for effective international action to resolve problems which have become of concern to the international community as a whole. Let it not be a wasted one.

The U.N. secretary general should increase his effort and capitalise on current collaboration to grapple with all major conflicts that threaten world peace and security. Left in abeyance, and allowed to drift, these disputes become more complex and intractable to the detriment of all concerned.

At the Amman Summit, the Arab Heads of State also recognised that numerous opportunities have been missed in the

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Randa Habib's Corner

Warning...

SMOKING is a bad habit that is so popular in our society. The cigarette has become part of our social life. In good mood or in bad mood, with a cup of coffee, or as an "after dinner" delight, cigarettes burn in our hands and damage our lungs.

The Ministry of Health has started a campaign to warn people against the dangers of smoking.

Smoking is now banned in public buildings and in public transport. How much these regulations are being adhered to is difficult to tell, but this is definitely a good step on the right direction.

Advertisement for cigarettes has for long been forbidden in Jordan's newspapers and on T.V. The import of chocolates or candies, wrapped in cigarette-like boxes is also banned. Tobacco houses and manufacturers are not allowed to sponsor any sport or cultural activity.

But it seems that all the restrictions of the world will not be enough to put us off smoking unless we change our attitudes towards the habit. Children should be taught at a very young age about the dangers of smoking, and should be trained to despise the cigarette. Among adults no one should feel obliged to offer cigarettes to his or her guests.

I was personally very pleased last Thursday to hear one of our friends, a heavy smoker in the past, who has now become a staunch anti-smoking campaigner say: "I will not offer you any cigarette and I would be grateful if you could abstain from smoking in my house." I found him very courageous, and I might soon take his example.

Bahrain fort excavators dig into ancient empires

By Patrick Werr
Reuter

BAHRAIN — Archaeologists in Bahrain have started to dig through 5,000 years of history hoping to shed light on a pre-Biblical Middle Eastern epic and the Asian travels of Alexander the Great.

The archaeologists and architects, funded by the United Nations and the Bahrain government, will initially explore and restore the site of a Portuguese fort on Bahrain's north coast.

But the 16th-century fort, perched on a hill rising above date groves to a commanding view of the Gulf, is just the beginning.

The nine-metre hill itself is the accumulated debris of earlier times — Roman, Greek, Babylonian, Persian, Assyrian and Sumerian.

The site goes back 5,000 years to the time of the Dilmun, traders from Sumeria in Iraq.

Sumerian lore named Dilmun as a paradise and Bahrain, replete with freshwater springs, may have been the origin of the Biblical Garden of Eden.

Restoration first priority

To preserve the now crumbling and endangered fort is the archaeologists' first priority, but later digging will penetrate the earliest periods of the island's rich history.

"It is an extremely wide and very well-preserved site," said Monik Kevran, a French archaeologist from the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique.

Kevran has studied the area for ten years and in November she began a detailed excavation of the fort after the U.N. Development Programme provided \$148,000 to fund two years of work at the site.

The Bahrain government intends to develop the island's embryo tourist industry and will renovate the site and support the dig after the first two years.

Man's encroachments have lent urgency to the project.

Land reclamation near the fort has blocked the natural drainage of ground water to the sea, raising the water table by a metre, and farms are being extended onto the ruins. Erosion has weakened the towers.

The massive stone fort is the most recent of three stacked one above the other. Persian princes running commercial empires built the earlier forts during two preceding centuries.

The team will also seek clues to the 4,000-year-old Middle Eastern epic of Gilgamesh which pre-dated the Bible with its legend of a flood that destroyed the ancient world.

The hero Gilgamesh came to Bahrain to seek out Sus Zuuzura, the survivor of the great flood, in a quest for immortality.

He told Gilgamesh to find the pearl of immortality by tying a stone to his feet and jumping into the sea — a technique Gulf pearl divers used up to modern times.

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Baldi fights back into lead in Daytona rally

DAYTONA BEACH, Florida (AP) — The Porsche 962 prototype of Italian Mauro Baldi and two-time winners Bob Wollek of France and Brian Redman of England battled back into the lead Sunday in the 18th hour of the sunbank Daytona 24-hours.

However, with one quarter of the grueling twice-around-the-clock race still to run, one car remained on the same lap as the leader and two others within striking distance.

The Jaguar XJR-9 prototype of American-born Eddie Cheever, Englishman Johnny Dumfries and John Watson of Northern Ireland was in second place, just 26.12 seconds behind the leader on the 5.6-kilometre (3.56-mile) road course at Daytona International Speedway.

That car was followed a lap back by the Jaguar of teammates Raul Boesel of Brazil, John Nielsen of Denmark and Martin Brundle of England.

The Porsche 962 of defending champions Al Holbert, Chip Robinson and Englishman Derek Bell led through most of the night, surviving an early-morning rain before losing 23 minutes and seven laps in the pits because of a turbocharger problem early in the 18th hour. However, the trio remained fourth and began to cut into the gap.

The third Jaguar in Scotsman Tom Walkinshaw's stable led for a while early Sunday and was still in second place after dawn. But the car, shared by Americans Danny Sullivan and Davy Jones

and Jan Lammers of the Netherlands, went out of the race during the 18th hour with a mechanical problem.

"The oil temperature went up," Lammers explained. "We hit debris during the night and... blocked part of the radiator. I think that caused the problems. We were driving with too high temperatures for too long, and that damaged the motor."

The leader was averaging 169.6 kmph (106.4 mph) after 18 hours.

All five of those cars had battled through Saturday evening and the pre-dawn hours Sunday.

The two remaining Jaguars hope to end the dominance of Porsche in the IMSA Camel GT Series' season-opening race.

Porsche prototypes have won at Daytona seven years in a row,

while cars powered by Porsche engines have won America's most prestigious endurance race 11

times in a row.

Another victim of mechanical problems was the Porsche 962 of two-time Daytona winners A.J. Foyt and Al Unser Jr. and team-mate Elliott Forbes-Robinson.

After hanging in the top 10 through the night, the car went more than an hour in the pits just before dawn to replace fifth gear.

Napoli clinches top Italian League position

ROME (R) — Diego Maradona's Napoli extended their lead at the top of the Italian First Division to four points Sunday with a comprehensive 3-1 away win at Ascoli.

Ascoli enjoyed brief glory after their Brazilian striker Casagrande scored in a counter-attack in the 11th minute, but three minutes later Napoli's Argentine captain equalised from the penalty spot and after that the champions were in command.

In the 27th minute Bruno Giordano put Napoli ahead after a cross from Brazilian striker Careca, who himself scored their third goal in the 49th minute from a neat pass by defender Giovanni Franci.

Maradona's younger brother Hugo watched the match from the Ascoli benches. Hugo, 18, has failed to find a regular place in Ascoli's first team since he joined this season.

But it was 27-year-old Diego's 10th goal this season and his fourth from the penalty spot. He is the League's top scorer with Careca in second place on eight goals.

Second-placed A.C. Milan managed a 1-1 draw at Fiorentina despite playing 20 minutes of the

second half with only 10 men following Antonio Virdis' dismissal for a series of fouls.

Fiorentina, who have suffered

crowd protests recently because of poor performances, went ahead three minutes after half-time, when Roberto Baggio pushed a ball through to winger Roberto Di Chiara who chipped home from the left of the goal.

Liverpool crushes Aston Villa

BIRMINGHAM, England (AP) — Second half goals by England international strikes John Barnes and Peter Beardsley gave Liverpool a 2-0 victory over Second Division leader Aston Villa Sunday and a place in the fifth round of the F.A. (Football Association) Soccer Cup.

Barnes struck with a 53rd minute header and Beardsley scored the second four minutes from time as Liverpool, the runaway First Division leader, snuffed out Villa's challenge before a capacity 49,000 crowd at Villa Park.

The result meant that Liverpool, which is unbeaten in the League, has not conceded a goal in its last nine games stretching back to before Christmas.

Paraguayan Davis Cup squad leaves for Prague

ASUNCION (R) — Paraguay's Davis Cup squad left for Prague Friday night with high hopes of defeating Czechoslovakia, but without their star player Victor Pecci, who is recovering from a hernia.

"It's going to be a tough match and we know the quality of the Czechs, but we are not going to let them intimidate us," team captain Alberto Gross Brown told reporters before leaving for Prague for the first-round world group tie.

Paraguay are pinning their hopes on Hugo Chapacu and Francisco Gonzalez to make up for the absence of the 32-year-old

Pecci, who recently underwent surgery for a hernia and will miss the competition Feb. 5-7.

The 27-year-old Chapacu has been training in Spain and will arrive in Prague Sunday, as will Gonzalez, 32, who has been training in the United States.

Victor Caballero and Roberto Stagni, both of whom have scant international experience, travelled with Gross Brown.

Paraguay have a history of shock upsets in Davis Cup play.

They beat the Czechoslovak squad led by Ivan Lendl 3-2 in Asuncion in 1983 and last year scored a major upset over the United States in Asuncion.

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2. Bibliotheksgespräche — a course on German literature for Germans or foreigners with a very good command of the German language from Feb. 8 to May 30, 1988. Persons interested are requested to come to the institute on Monday, Feb. 8 at 8 p.m.

For more information contact tel. 641993 from 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.

except on Fridays and Sundays.



Soviets' shining star Larinov in action

Favourites for gold in Calgary

By Barry Wilner

AP Sports Writer

NEW YORK — World champions Brian Orser of Canada and Katarina Witt of East Germany are the favourites for gold in the Winter Olympics figure skating competition but Americans Brian Boitano and Debi Thomas are not far behind.

Despite four consecutive national titles and the 1986 world crown, Boitano is rated second to Orser. Thomas, who also won the U.S. and World Championships in 1986, is ranked behind Witt.

Although the United States is sending one of its strongest figure skating teams ever to the Winter Games, only Boitano and Thomas appear likely to challenge for gold medals. Soviet couples are heavy favourites in both pairs and dance, the other two disciplines.

Boitano skated unimpressively in the freestyle at the U.S. Championships, yet still won easily and wasn't particularly disturbed.

Orser, who won the 1987 World Championship after four straight runner-up finishes in the major international events (1984 Olympics) and Worlds, 1985 and '86 Worlds) has more flash to his skating.

The difference could come down to whether the judges view Orser the way they did Scott Hamilton in 1984. Hamilton, who won four straight World Championships, had the gold medal locked up at Sarajevo as long as he didn't fall. He didn't and won, even though Orser skated better in the short and long programmes.

Boitano was fifth at the Sarajevo Games. If the judges feel Orser deserves the same stature as Hamilton — and with the Olympics on his home ice — Boitano has little chance.

But Boitano's freestyle programme, skated to music from TV's "Napoleonic and Josephine," is as difficult as any skated at an Olympics. If Boitano peaks at Calgary, Orser will need a sparkling routine beat him.

They figure to be 1-2, even though Alexander Fadiev of the Soviet Union, the 1985 world champion, will be in Calgary, making it the first time three men's world champions will meet in an Olympics.

Fadiev is the strongest in tracing compulsory figures, the first part of the competition, but he lacks the freestyle skills of Orser and Boitano.

Witt, a three-time world champion, skated magnificently in the recent European Championships to defend her title. She tends to finish



Orser: A magician of the ice.

behind the Soviets in the compulsories, then dominates the short and long programmes.

Thomas' freestyle, like Witt's, will be to music from "Carmen." The American's coach Alex McGowan, reminds everyone that Debi very nearly defended her title at the worlds last year while skating with an injured foot.

Thomas has overcome the foot problems and clearly was the best in an outstanding field at the nationals. Like Witt, Orser and Boitano, this is her final year as an amateur.

"I want to go out in style," she said. "I've been dreaming about the Olympics for so long... forever."

U.S. trainer Carlo Fassi believes in his skaters. He also believes in Witt.

"I think for Katarina to lose, she must fall down a few times," Fassi said. "But if she does, any of the U.S. girls can win."

Kira Ivanova of the Soviet Union is the best compulsory skater in the world. But she is less convincing than her rivals in the short and long programmes.

Norman storms into Belgian squash final

ANTWERP, Belgium (R) — Ross Norman of New Zealand moved to within one match of winning a \$26,000 diamond-studded squash ball when he beat Australian Brett Martin 9-6, 9-6, 9-3 in the semifinals of the Belgian Grand Prix tournament Saturday.

The ball has been offered by the organisers to the first player to win the tournament three times in a five-year period — and Norman won here in 1986 and 1987.

"The prospect of winning the trophy doesn't make me more nervous," Norman said. "It's just another pay check."

Norman, the 1986 world champion and currently ranked number four in the world, took the

initiative early in each of the first two games but his Belgium-based opponent rallied stoutly, making superb use of drop shots.

Both times, though, unforced errors ruined Martin's fightback and in the third game, Norman finally asserted complete authority over the Australian to win in 43 minutes.

"I always have trouble when I play Ross," Martin said. "I'm just not fit enough for him."

In Sunday's final Norman will play world champion Jansher Khan of Pakistan, who beat Briton Phil Kenyon 9-1, 9-2, 9-6 in the other semifinal.

Norman said playing the top seed was "just another job."

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U.S. basketball roundup

Kings nest 126 to beat Suns in road games

PHOENIX, Arizona (AP) —

Otis Thorpe

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Jordan attends trade talks

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan will take part in the 44th meeting of Arab Economic and Social Council (AESC) which is due to open in Tunis Monday.

The four-day meeting will follow up the implementation of resolutions issued at the previous meeting and the financial condition of the Arab League affiliated organisations.

In addition, the delegates will discuss the questions of Arab food security, inter-Arab trade and recommendations by a spe-

NEWS IN BRIEF

Industrial investments in Jordan decline

AMMAN (J.T.) — A total of JD 15 million was invested in industrial projects in Jordan during the past year compared with JD 20 million during 1986, according to Sawt Al Shaab newspaper. The paper quoted sources at the Ministry of Industry and Trade as saying that capital during 1987 was invested in industries manufacturing plastic products, engineering equipment, furniture, kitchens, doors, paper, textiles, chemicals, leather and other agricultural produce.

Ministry demands licence for imports

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Ministry of Industry and Trade has banned merchants from importing foreign goods without first acquiring an import licence from the ministry. A report in the local press said that no one is allowed to open a letter of credit or order the dispatch of goods to Jordan without the required licence. According to the report, the ministry places all responsibility for any unfavourable results in transactions of this nature on the importers.

TCC disconnects thousands of phone lines

AMMAN (J.T.) — The telecommunications Corporation (TCC) has disconnected thousands of telephone lines for subscribers who failed to pay outstanding bills until September 1987. According to a report in the Ad Dostour newspaper, tens of subscribers who were affected by the decision, packed the TCC's payment centres to settle their balances. The TCC usually charges JD 5 as reconnection fees. The corporation has taken steps to facilitate payment procedures by extending working hours at various TCC centres and banks.

Economist examines relations between U.S., Arab World

AMMAN (J.T.) — Responding to an invitation from the Centre for Contemporary Arab Studies at Georgetown University, the president of the Arab Society for the Protection of Industrial Property (ASPIP), Talal Abu Ghazaleh, delivered a lecture, last week entitled "Impediments to U.S.-Arab Economic Relations".

In his lecture, Abu Ghazaleh examined the U.S.-Arab economic relations and suggested means to improve these relations to the better understanding of the Arab causes, especially the Palestinian issue. Abu Ghazaleh said the U.S. administration should respond positively to the Arab political issues if it hopes to improve the economic cooperation with the Arab World.

Abu Ghazaleh responded to an invitation by the dean of School of Business Administration at Georgetown University and spent a full day with professors and students discussing matters related to intellectual property and the role of accountancy in economics on the level of the international associations he heads and especially matters related to the Arab region.

The U.S. visit programme also included the participation of Abu Ghazaleh in the international symposium organised on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of GATT which is a U.N. organisation dealing with international trade.

Poland announces biggest price hikes in six years

WARSAW (R) — The Polish government Saturday announced sweeping price rises for essential goods averaging 27 per cent but raising the cost of food by 40 per cent.

To cushion the blow all workers and state employees will receive immediate pay rises of 6,000 zloties (\$20) per month — about 20 per cent of the average monthly wage.

The government says the price increases are needed to reduce state subsidies as part of its efforts to reform the economy.

Despite becoming almost an annual event since 1982, the increases have had little effect on the government's huge expenditure in subsidising essential goods and services.

A tense situation which arises tonight should be ignored. Be sure to keep any important promises you have made recently.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21) Avoid an acquaintance who is a schemer and could get you into trouble. Also, steer clear of an irate co-worker later in the day.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21) Don't get upset over a bill you have checked it carefully — you may be in error. Be especially careful with your finances tonight.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 20) A tense situation which arises tonight should be ignored.

Capricorn (Dec. 22 to Jan. 20) A tense situation which arises tonight should be ignored.

GOPIO (Jan. 21 to Feb. 19) Your work load may seem too difficult to handle, but be patient and muddle through. Don't get upset over constructive criticism.

PISCES (Feb. 20 to Mar. 20) Don't get into a new arrangement if it will take more time than you really have to spare. This is not a good time to take any financial risks.

LEO (Jul. 22 to Aug. 21) Don't let a private anxiety make you act unwise. Think before you act, as well as when making those of your friends or clients.

MOON CHILDREN (June 22 to Jul. 21) Be sure to steer clear of a greedy, domineering individual. Your imagination and find a way to improve your income.

TAURUS (Apr. 20 to May 20) Use much care in handling your financial reports or statements, as well as when dealing with those of your friends or clients.

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South Africa's divided liberals fight for political life

CAPE TOWN (R) — While South Africa's far right is mounting its strongest bid for power, the white liberal opposition is fighting for its political life.

Political analysts say the fragmented anti-apartheid parties, badly mauled in a whites-only general election last year, risk annihilation if President P.W. Botha calls another general election this year.

"They are all lurching from disaster to disaster," said Robert Schrire, professor of political studies at the university of Cape Town.

The liberal groups could avoid further losses if an election were held now by uniting, Schrire said. "If they can't, they will lose half of what they have."

The liberals' Achilles heel remains law and order, the issue which cost them votes last year. The white electorate shunned their message of conciliation and instead voted for a stronger crackdown on black opposition.

Last year's overwhelming election victory by the ruling National Party (NP) led to months of bickering and post-mortems among liberals.

The Progressive Federal Party

(PFP), the main parliamentary grouping, lost seven of its 27 seats and gave up its position as the official opposition to the fast-growing far-right Conservative Party. Anti-apartheid independents won just one seat.

The blow was all the greater since liberals had hoped that white South Africans, tired by months of black protest violence, would finally come round to their message of reform and negotiation with the black majority.

The already fragmented liberal opposition split into ever tinier factions, often over obscure tactical differences or personality clashes.

The Independent Movement, launched before the election amid much fanfare, broke up when its founders, ex-South African Ambassador to Britain Denis Worrall and former National Party member Wynand Malan, went their separate ways.

But now there are signs that the liberals are beginning to unite for municipal elections due in

October. Their moves have been given added urgency by mounting speculation that Botha will call an early general election.

"The PFP can hardly afford the luxury of interminable internecine squabbles while its opponents already are out in strength organising and canvassing for the coming elections," the liberal Cape Times said in an editorial.

The liberal parties are seeking

alliances not only among themselves but with extra-parliamentary groups and parties in the Indian and coloured houses of the tricameral parliament, which excludes the black majority.

The centrist New Republic Party, which saw its parliamentary team cut from five to one in last May's election, appears close to an alliance with Worrall's independents.

Worrall said he had held talks on cooperation with the PFP and New Republic Party as well as Indian and coloured parties.

"It's not simply a question of

organising for opposition. It is a

case that the country and all the

people in South Africa need a

vision ... that says to blacks and whites this country has a future,"

Worrall told Reuters.

Rebels bring January death toll to 92 in Indian state

AGARTALA, India (R) — Tribal separatists killed 30 Bengali immigrants, including women and children, with automatic rifle fire Saturday night in the worst violence to hit Tripura state in eight years.

Tripura National Volunteer (TNV) rebels, who have called for a boycott of elections in the north eastern state Tuesday, have killed 58 people in two days, taking the toll so far this month to 92, compared with 77 in all of 1987.

Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi put the army in charge of law and order in the Marxist-ruled state last week after visiting to campaign for his Congress (I) Party.

The TNV waged a 10-year campaign to expel settlers who came from neighbouring Bangladesh. More than 2,000 people have been killed.

The immigrants, who came before Bangladesh won independence from Pakistan in 1971, make up nearly 70 per cent of Tripura's 2.6 million population.

Gunmen kill Salvadorean magistrate; 8 bodies found

SAN SALVADOR (R) — A Salvadorean Supreme Court magistrate was seized outside his home and killed by unidentified men, police have said.

Police said Dr. Efrain Huez Chavez, 43, an ex-vice-minister of justice, was seized in the capital's plush Escalon district Friday night as he left his house with his wife. He was bound into car and his bullet-ridden body was found in another district a few hours later.

There was no immediate indication of who was responsible.

Earlier Friday night, Vice-Minister of Public Security General Rinaldo Golcher said security forces had uncovered a plot by leftist guerrillas to kill politicians as part of an urban campaign before local elections in March.

In a separate incident, eight corpses showing signs of torture, including the bodies of two women hanging from a tree, were found north east of the capital, a few

guerrillas attacked a Congress election rally at Gabardi village in west Tripura killing 10 people and wounding eight, police said.

A different group raided a Bengali settlement at Paticherra in the north of the state shooting dead three children, three women and four men and injuring five.

A third band of rebels swooped on sleeping villagers in Brahmapurra killing 10 and wounding six.

The night of violence was the worst since 211 people died in ethnic riots in 1980.

Tripura Chief Minister Nripen Chakrabarty blamed Gandhi's refusal to talk to the TNV for the uprising in violence.

"The military solution will not work as it has also failed in Punjab," he told Reuters Sunday.

Gandhi said he would "act very tough" against the rebels. His government has deployed 3,000 soldiers and 27,000 police and paramilitary troopers against 250 guerrillas.

"We call on the East German leadership to replace criminal proceedings with dialogue and tolerance," Genscher told members of his Free Democratic Party (FDP), one of three parties in Bonn's centre-right federal government.

"We call on the East German leadership to release the detainees and to open discussions with the young."

Around 200 activists were imprisoned by East German authorities this month when some of them tried to join an official march commemorating two German revolutionaries murdered in 1919.

Most were later freed, but last Monday police swooped on another six dissidents, among those now in custody.

Genscher said the dissidents had gathered peacefully and "cannot understand that the society they live in... can mistrust them so much, and even start criminal proceedings against them."

The style of the killing was typical of right-wing death squads, which human rights groups and the Roman Catholic Church say have stepped up activity in recent months.

The body of a 23-year-old student was was responsible.

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Genscher calls for release of E. German dissidents

BONN (R) — West German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher appealed to East Germany's Communist leadership Saturday to release men and women imprisoned during a recent crackdown on dissent.

East Germany's Protestant Church also called for the release of at least 10 dissidents from church-affiliated peace and human rights groups still in detention after an abortive demonstration two weeks ago.

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GOREN BRIDGE

BY CHARLES GOREN
AND OSCAR SHARIF
1987 Young Men's Service Inc.

EACH TRICK IN ITS TIME

Both vulnerable South deals.

NORTH ♦ Q 9 8 3
♦ Q 7 3 2
♦ 10 4
♦ 7 6 3

WEST ♦ A 10 8 7
♦ Q 9 8 6 4 3
♦ 7 3
♦ 10

EAST ♦ A 9 8 5 4 2
♦ K 5 2
♦ 9 0
♦ A K Q 8 5 2
♦ A K Q

The bidding: South West North East

2 ♦ Pass 2 NT Pass

3 ♦ Pass 4 ♦ Pass

5 ♦ Pass 6 ♦ Pass

Pass Pass

Opening lead: Six of ♦

The order in which you cash winning tricks can be of the utmost importance. Seldom has this precept been illustrated more graphically than on this deal.

North-South reached a fair six-spade contract. South's bid of five spades asked North to evaluate his trump holding for slam purposes, and North felt that, in view of his negative response and minimal raise, the queen of spades justified

accepting his partner's invitation. Had trumps divided 3-2, declarer would have had several possibilities to land his slam. The 4-1 split, however, posed a problem that South proved unable to surmount.

He ruffed the opening lead and led the king of trumps, which was allowed to hold. West won the jack of trumps, continuation and forced South again with a heart. Now declarer needed a trump coup to land his contract. He started to run his diamonds. On the third round West sluffed a club. Since declarer had to discard both of dummy's hearts, he could discard only two clubs from the table. When declarer eventually led a club, West was able to ruff for down one.

To make his contract, declarer had to find specifically a 3-2 diamond break. Also, West had to have at least one club. After cashing two rounds of diamonds, declarer's next play should have been the ace of clubs. Only then could he proceed to ruff off his diamond tricks. West must keep discarding, but a two-card position will now arise where West has 10-8 of trumps in front of dummy's Q-9. The trump coup works to perfection, and the slam rolls home.

Backing by the Register appears particularly important in the Democratic race, where Mis-

Joint U.S.-Soviet nuclear test possible, expert says

LAS VEGAS (R) — A Soviet nuclear expert has said U.S. and Soviet experts could jointly monitor a nuclear test in the first half of this year, but his American counterpart said this schedule might be too ambitious.

"We will have to intensify our work schedule for a joint test in the first half of this year. But each side now understands better the technology used by the other side," said Igor Pavlyuk, leader of a Soviet team of 20 scientists visiting the main U.S. nuclear testing site.

But Robert Barker, head of the U.S. team which received the Soviet scientists, said: "The optimist believes the first jointly monitored test could occur as early as May. I would hate to be held responsible for doing it."

Pavlyuk and Barker spoke to reporters at the conclusion of a five-day Soviet visit that followed a mission of U.S. scientists to the chief Soviet nuclear testing site.

"Both sides have been making an equal effort," Pavlyuk said. "One cannot say one has done more or less than the other. I believe this cooperation will extend to other areas of U.S.-Soviet relations."

In a joint statement the two sides agreed to jointly monitor at least one nuclear test in each country. Barker said it had not been decided which side would conduct the first monitored test.

The method by which kiloton yields would be measured to both sides' satisfaction has been a major stumbling block to a testing pact. One of the purposes of the exchange of visits by scientists

was to iron out a "joint verification experiment" agreed at a initial round of negotiations in Geneva last November.

Barker said disagreement over the U.S.-preferred Cortex system of measuring yields had been greatly exaggerated.

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Sihanouk resignation 'could be another bluff'

PEKING (R) — Prince Norodom Sihanouk's latest resignation from the leadership of the three-party Kampuchean guerrilla coalition could be only a bluff, a well-informed Asian diplomat said Sunday.

Sihanouk's move does not spell the end of peace talks with the Vietnamese-backed Kampuchean government, but is aimed at pressuring his uneasy allies and China, their main backer, said the source, who maintains close contacts with Sihanouk aides.

"He has not abandoned the struggle, and has not abandoned the talks," the diplomat said.

"He wants to be free man. He always complains that he has to come up with a consensus among the coalition. He is trying to tell the world he needs to be free to work towards peace," the source said.

Another Peking-based diplomat pointed out that Sihanouk had represented only himself, and not the coalition, in the two recent rounds of peace talks with Vietnamese Prime Minister Hun Sen.

His resignation need not affect the next round of talks scheduled for Pyongyang in North Korea, the diplomat added.

In his statement Saturday, Sihanouk said he had been forced to step down because of constant hostility from his coalition ally Son Sann, who heads the Khmer People's National Liberation Front.